

# “THE WORLD WILL HATE YOU”

Acts 21:27-40

Pastor Keith E. Gephart

## INTRODUCTION

Before we get to the details of this passage before us, let us review some of the important spiritual lessons we find here in Acts chapter 21:

- 1) Our life’s goal must not be to save ourselves from harm (21:4); rather, \_\_\_\_\_ yourself and follow Christ (Mt. 16:25).
- 2) A parent has joy in seeing his children \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord (21:9). See III Jn. 4.
- 3) We must have a self- \_\_\_\_\_ spirit (21:13). Paul was not intimidated by persecution and trials.
- 4) Believers must submit to the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord (21:14); see Ps. 143:10: “*Teach me to do your will; for you are my God.*”
- 5) We are merely God’s \_\_\_\_\_ in His work (21:19); His grace is sufficient (II Cor. 12:9).
- 6) Christ’s enemies are also quick to slander and \_\_\_\_\_ His servants (21:28).
- 7) A \_\_\_\_\_ appeal is generally effective (21:37). See I Peter 3:15.
- 8) We must be \_\_\_\_\_ in the face of danger (21:39). See Rom. 1:16; this is the **main lesson** we see today.

In order to have everyone love you, you simply need to be kind and loving, right? Wrong!

There was never a more loving and kind person to walk the face of the earth than Jesus, the many came to hate Him deeply. Jesus spoke the truth—in love, but sons of darkness do not love the truth—they hate it! The hatred of the satanic opposition toward Jesus was deep and abiding, and Jesus warned his followers that they also would experience such hatred if they faithfully lived for Him and practiced the truth:

“This I command you, that you love one another. If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. *If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you*” (Jn. 15:17-19; NASB)

Our Apostle Paul was a loving man who had a zeal for the Lord that surpassed that of most every human being who has ever lived. He continually sacrificed himself, his time, his energy, for Christ’s cause; as he himself said, he “spent and was spent” for Christ’s cause. He sacrificed himself for others:

- For the lost he zealously preached the gospel and invited them to repent and trust Christ.
- For the saved he energetically disciplined, trained, preached and taught so that they could become more Christ-like.
- He worked to provide his own living so as not to be a burden for the churches where he ministered.
- He especially had a burden for his own people—Israel, the Jews—that they might be saved. He even said that he could almost wish himself accursed—separated from Christ forever—for the sake of his Jewish brethren so that they in turn might be saved (Rom. 9:3-5; 10:1).

But, how did his unsaved Jewish relatives respond to his love for them and his outreach to them?

- They often opposed him and drove him out of their synagogues and cities.
- They frequently tried to turn his listeners against him.
- They beat him many times.
- They often attempted to kill him.

How can we explain this? Only one way. These opponents were working for a “higher power”—someone who hated Paul more than they did—because he hates Paul’s Master with unmitigated hatred.

We are in a spiritual warfare, and we must not get too comfortable with this world and its citizens (see Eph. 6:10ff). We can only fight this world system with the power of God and while wearing His armor. As Paul says in Eph. 6, once we have done all we can, we must still **stand firm (13)**. *God doesn’t promise an easy life, but he does promise a blessed one!*

In our passage today, we see Paul with amazing fortitude and composure standing before a hostile crowd who wanted nothing more than his blood. He did not hate them; he loved them and wanted them saved!

### **YOU MUST STAND STRONG AND BRAVELY BEFORE A HOSTILE WORLD WHILE SHARING THE GOSPEL.**

Here we see the animosity of Satan expressed through his workers.

#### I. EXAGGERATION AND LIES (27-29)

- The attack was from unsaved and frustrated Jews from Asia. (Ephesus; 27)
- They exaggerated Paul’s success in preaching. (28)
- They lied about his attitude toward the People, the Law, and the temple. (28)
- They lied and jumped to conclusions about Gentiles in the Court of Israel. (28-29)

#### II. VIOLENCE AND A MOB SCENE (30-31)

- The city became aroused, rushed together, violently grasped Paul, drug him out of the temple, and shut the temple doors—into the holy courts. (30)
- Attempted to kill Paul, and a report sent up to the chiliarch (tribune) and cohort. (31)

#### III. RESCUE AND BINDING OF PAUL BY THE ROMAN COMMANDER (32-35)

- Hundreds of soldiers led by “centurions” intimidated the mob. (32)
- Paul was bound with two chains as a violent felon, and then questioned. (33)
- The complete confusion of the mob made getting “facts” impossible. (34)
- Paul was forcefully carried toward the fortress and barracks due to mob violence. (35)
- The crowd was crying out for Paul’s death. (36)

#### IV. COURTEOUS AND COMPOSED REQUEST BY THE PRISONER (36-40)

- Paul spoke with dignity, calmness, and was articulate—in Greek. (37)
- The tribune had assumed him to be an Egyptian zealot and false prophet named Ben Stada. (38)
- Paul declared his citizenship of Tarsus—not yet his Roman citizenship. (39)
- Paul gained permission to speak, and he speaks in Aramaic [or Hebrew]. (40)

### CONCLUSION

This is an amazing scene—the one being attacked gains control of the situation and sets out to reach his attackers with the Gospel! Oh, that God would give us such courage to stand for Him!

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